

Message Text

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ACTION A-01

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SY-05 NSCE-00 SAB-02 OC-06 CCO-00 USSS-00 /043 W
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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7114

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 PANAMA 03547

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT: SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR CANAL
ZONE VISIT

WHITE HOUSE FOR PHIL WISE

1. AS A RESULT OF THE VISIT OF THE PRE-ADVANCE TEAM WE
HAVE SOME NEW THOUGHTS CONCERNING THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT
TO THE CANAL ZONE. WE BELIEVE THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL BE
INTERESTED PRIMARILY IN TWO THINGS. FIRST, WE BELIEVE
THAT HE, AS AN ENGINEER, WILL ENJOY MORE THAN THE USUAL
TOUR OF THE LOCKS. CONSEQUENTLY WE ARE SUGGESTING A
CONSIDERABLE CHUNK OF TIME AT MIRAFLORES LOCKS. SECOND,
IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONNEL TO THE CONTINUED
EFFICIENT OPERATION OF THE CANAL, WE BELIEVE AN EXCHANGE
OF VIEWS WITH CANALA EMPLOYEES IS HIGHLY DESIRABLE TO RE-
ASSURE THEM, RESTORE CONFIENCE AND SHOW THAT--FAR FROM
"GIVING AWAY" THE CANAL--THE PRESIDENT IS WORKING TO KEEP
IT OPERATING EFFICIENTLY. A THIRD EVENT, A VERY SHORT
VISIT WITH MEMBERS OF U.S. ARMED FORCES HERE WOULD HAVE A
FAVORABLE MORALE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS IMPACT. ALL THREE
OF THESE EVENTS WOULD LEND THEMSELVES TO GOOD TELEVISION
COVERAGE. THEY WOULD BE UNLIKE EACH OTHER AND UNLIKE ANY
OF THE EVENTS OF THE PREVIOUS DAY. (LARGE CROWDS WOULD
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NOT BE NECESSARY IN THE ZONE, SINCE THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN
A PART OF THE STORY THE PREVIOUS DAY IN PANAMA CITY AND
ON THE SAME DAY IN THE PROVINCIAL TOWN WHICH IS YET TO
BE SELECTED.)

2. BECAUSE OF THE PRESIDENT'S BACKGROUND, WE ARE GIVING
SOME TECHNICAL DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED LOCKS TOUR. TOURS

GIVEN MAY NOT BE SUFFICIENT IF MORE THAN TWO OR THREE
QUESTIONS ARE ASKED AT EACH STOP.

3. SINCE WE DO NOT KNOW ARRIVAL TIME IN THE ZONE, WE GIVE
"X" AS THAT TIME, ADDING MINUTES CONSUMED BY THE SCHEDULE.

X-ARRIVE FORT CLAYTON BY HELICOPTER. WALK 100
YARDS TO VALENT SERVICEMEN'S CENTER. POSSIBILITY
OF A SNACK AND CHAT WITH ABOUT 25 ARMY-NAVY-AIR
FORCE AND MARINE ENLISTED MEN.

XPLUS 15 - LEAVE VALENT SERVICEMENT'S CENTER BY AUTOMOBILE.
DRIVE 5 MINUTES TO MIRAFLORES (EST. 1 1/2 MI.).

X PLUS 20 - ARRIVE MIRAFLORES LOCKS. THE PRESIDENT AND
MRS. CARTER WILL BE GREETED BY GOV. PARFITT AND
OTHER PANCANAL OFFICIALS. CROSS MITER GATES
OF LOCKS. GO UP THREE FLIGHTS OF STAIRS SINGLE
FILE. (MAXIMUM CAPACITY-40 PERSONS, INCLUD-
ING PRESS, BECAUSE OF SAFETY FACTORS). (ACTUAL
WALKING TIME 3 MINUTES.)

X PLUS 30 - BRIEFING ON LOCKS OPERATION (5 MIN). INSPECTION
OF CONTROL BOARD IN TOWER; PRESIDENT AND MRS.
CARTER OPEN OR CLOSE VALVES FOR GATES BY TURN-
ING OPERATING HANDLES; MOVE TO BALCONY TO OB-
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SERVER MOVEMENT OF WATER, GATES AND SHIP. (12 MIN)

X PLUS 48 - ARRIVE AT SECOND FLOOR OF TOWER (UNDERSIDE OF
CONTROL BOARD). INSPECT MECHANICAL INTERLOCK,
ELECTRICAL SWITCHING GEAR AND SELSYN MOTORS--
MOSTLY ORIGINAL CANAL EQUIPMENT. (FOUR PEOPLE
WILL BE ABLE TO SEE EVERYTHING. OTHERS WILL
HAVE PARTIALLY TO TOTALLY OBSCURED VIEW.)
(3-5 MIN).

X PLUS 53 - PROCEED DOWN TWO FLIGHTS OF STAIRS. PROCEED TO
MACHINERY OPERATING TUNNEL. OBSERVE OPERATION
OF LOCKS MITER GATE MACHINERY--A FORTY-HP MOTOR
DRIVING A 1600-TO-1 GEAR TRAIN INCLUDING A 19-FT
DIAMETER BULL WHEEL AND STRUT-RM, WHICH SWINGS
THE 700-PLUS-TON GATE. THEN PROCEED FURTHER
THROUGH TUNNEL TO SEE RISING STEM VALVE MACHINERY
OPERATE. (10 PEOPLE CAN SEE EVERYTHING; OTHERS
WILL HAVE OBSCURED VIEW.) (6 MINUTES).

X PLUS 60 - RETURN TO GROUND LEVEL AND CROSS GATES.

4. AT THIS POINT, WE OFFER TWO ALTERNATIVES, EACH OF WHICH HAS PROS AND CONS.

OPTION 1

PROCEED TO THEATER AT MIRAFLORES (ABOUT 150 FEET FROM GATES). THIS THEATER HAS A FIXED-SEAT CAPACITY OF ABOUT 90 WITH STANDING ROOM FOR 30. CAPACITY WOULD BE REDUCED BY INSTALLATION OF TV EQUIPMENT. WE WOULD ENVISION AND INVITATION-LIST CROWD OF PANCANAL EMPLOYEES--MAINLY NON-MANAGEMENT, WITH HEAVIEST CONCENTRATION IN TRADE UNIONS, ELECTED CIVIC COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES, ETC. LENGTH OF SESSION RECOMMENDED AT 30 MIN. AFTERWARD, PROCEED TO HELICOPTERS (REPOSITIONED 100-300 FEET FROM THEATER) AND FLY TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TOCUMENT AIRPORT. IF TIME PERMITS, OVERFLIGHT OF PEDRO MIGUEL LOCKS AND GAILLARD CUT IS POSSIBLE. (DIRECT MIRAFLORES-TOCUMEN FLIGHT TIME: 15 MIN. INDIRECT VIA GAILLARD CUT: 20 MIN.)

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ACTION A-01

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-----077412 221256Z /50

R 221230Z MAY 78
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WHITE HOUSE FOR PHIL WISE

OPTION 2

PROCEED TO HELICOPTER(S) STANDING BY 1-TO-3 MIN. WALK FROM

GATES. FLY TO ALBROOK AFS. (FLIGHT TIME: 8 MIN.)

PROCEED BY CAR TO HOME OF PANCANAL EMPLOYEE OR OTHER SUIT-
ABLE SITE IN BALBOA-ANCON AREA. (5 MIN. BY CAR AT 25 MPH.)

ARRIVE MEETING SITE. MEET WITH 10-12 PANCANAL EMPLOYEES.
TV AND PRESS WILL HAVE BEEN PRE-POSITIONED. THIRTY-MINUTE
CHAT OVER COFFEE. FORMAT WOULD BE A CONVERSATION CIRCLE.
GUESTS AS IN OPTION 1.

RETURN TO ALBROOK FOR HELICOPTER FLIGHT TO TOCUMEN. (5
MIN. BY CAR). (FLIGHT TIME TO TOCUMEN: 15 MIN.
DISCUSSION: THE THEATER OPTION SAVES TIME AND INCLUDES
A LARGER NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES. THE HOME OPTION GIVES A MORE
INFORMAL SETTING AND ALLOWS POSSIBILITY OF MORE GENUINE
EXCHANGE. BOTH ARE PROBABLY ADEQUATE AS TV/PRESS EVENTS.
WE DO NOT RECOMMEND A GENERAL PUBLIC FUNCTION IN THE CANAL
ZONE. THERE IS STILL A HIGH DEGREE OF DISSATISFACTION WITH
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U.S. POLICY ON THE CANAL, AND THE LIKELIHOOD OF A DIS-
COURTEOUS ACT IS HIGH BECAUSE OF THE EXISTENCE OF A SMALL
BUT HIGHLY VOCAL FRINGE. WE WOULD ENVISAGE PARTICIPATION,
IN EITHER OPTION 1 OR OPTION 2, OF THE ENTIRE SPECTRUM OF
OPINIONS IN THE ZONE, EXCEPT FOR THE FRINGE. AS A RESULT,
IN BOTH OPTIONS, WE WOULD EXPECT THE GROUP TO BE RESPECTFUL
BUT NOT NECESSARILY SUPPORTIVE OF THE PRESIDENT. MRS.
CARTER WOULD BE EXPECT TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY MEETING WITH
ZONE RESIDENTS IF SHE DESIRED. INVITATION LISTS, IN EITHER
CASE, MIGHT BE INITIATED BY LEADERS OF THE RESIDENT COM-
MUNITY THEMSELVES, SUBJECT TO FINAL DECISION BY CZ AUTHOR-
ITIES/WH/USSS. WITH BOTH OPTIONS PRESIDENT COULD
MAKE A BRIEF STATEMENT, PREFERABLY FROM NOTES, TO BE FOL-
LOWED BY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. JORDEN

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